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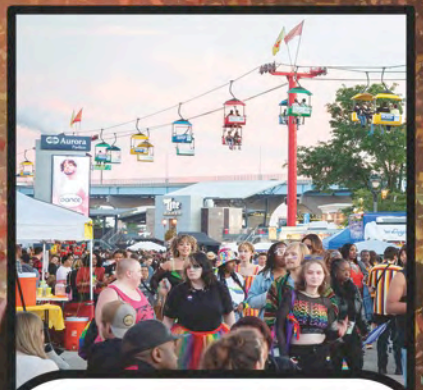

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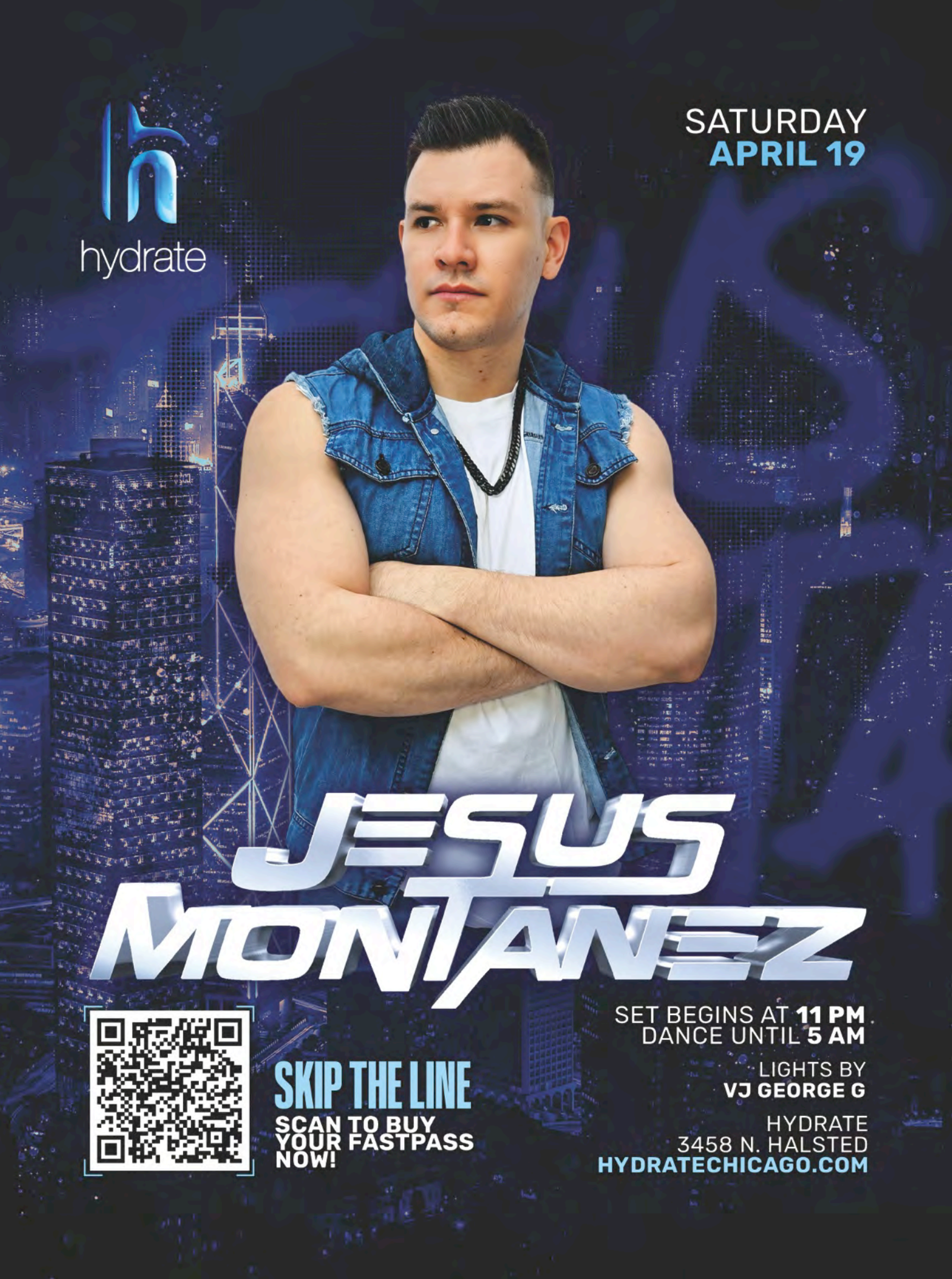
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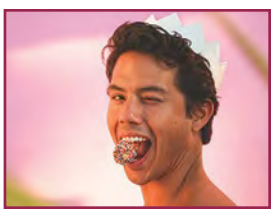

Publisher
Stacy Bridges

Creative Director (Web)
Miguel Ortuno

Contributors
Roger V. McCaffrey-Boss
Holly Maholm
Bill Malcolm
Gregg Shapiro
Terri Schlichenmeyer

Production
Stacy Bridges
James Gumb

Photography
Bear Lens Photography
CHRIS K.

Sales
DAVID D.

Public Relations
Nick Wille

NATIONAL SALES REPRESENTATIVE
RIVENDELL MEDIA
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Mark Nagel (Co-Founder)
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GRAB MAGAZINE
3712 N. BROADWAY #315
CHICAGO, IL 60613
TEL: 773-707-2660
WWW.GRABCHICAGO.COM
WWW.GRABBYAWARDS.COM
EMAIL: **GRABSTACY@GMAIL.COM**

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GRAB MAX

“Modern” family: An interview with “Mid-Century Modern”’s Max Mutchnick

By Gregg Shapiro

Photo By Luke Fontana

It’s been a long time – maybe 25 years when “Will & Grace” debuted – since there’s been so much excitement about a new, queer sitcom premiering. “Mid-Century Modern,” bowing on Hulu on March 28, is the creation of Max Mutchnick and David Kohan, the gay men who were also behind “Will & Grace.” Set in Palm Springs, California, following the death of the one of their closest friends, three gay men gather to mourn. Swept up in the emotions of the moment, Bunny (Nathan Lane) suggests that Atlanta-based flight attendant Jerry (Matt Bomer) and New York-based fashion editor Arthur (Nathan Lee Graham) move into the mid-century modern home he shares with his mother Sybil (the late Linda Lavin). Over the course of the first season’s 10 episodes, hilarity ensues. That is, except for the episode in which they address Sybil’s passing. The three male leads are all fabulous, and the ensemble cast, including Pamela Adlon as Bunny’s sister Mindy, and the stellar line-up of guest stars, such as Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Vanessa Bayer, Richard Kind, and Cheri Oteri, keep the humor buzzing. Shortly before the premiere of “Mid-Century Modern,” Max generously made time for a Zoom interview.

Gregg Shapiro: I’d like to begin by saying it’s always a delight to speak to a fellow Emerson College alum. In ways would you say that Emerson impacted your professional and creative life?
***Max Mutchnick*:** I think Emerson was the first place that reflected back to me that my voice, my thoughts were good, and they were worth listening to. I developed a confidence at Emerson that did not exist in my body and soul. It was a collection of a lot of things that took place in Boston, but I mean we can just put it all under the Emerson umbrella.

GS: Before “Will & Grace,” you co-created the NBC sitcom “Boston Common,” which starred fellow Emerson alum Anthony Clark. Is it important for you to maintain those kinds of alumni relationships?
MM: Because Emersonians are such scrappy little monkeys and they end up being everywhere in the world, you can't help but work with someone from Emerson at some point in your career. I'm certainly more inclined to engage with someone from Emerson once I learn that they went to my alma mater. For me, it has much more to do with history and loyalty. I don't think of myself as one of those guys that says, “Loyalty means a lot to me. I'm someone that really leans into history.” It's just what my life and career turned out to be. The longer I worked with people and the more often I worked with them, the safer that I felt, which means that I was more creative and that's the name of the game. I've got to be as comfortable as possible so I can be as creative as possible. If that means that a person from Emerson is in the room, so be it. (Costume designer) Lori Eskowitz would be the Emerson version. And then (writer and actor) Dan Bucatinsky would be another version. When I'm around them for a long time, that's when the best stuff comes.

GS: Relationships are important. On that subject, your new Hulu sitcom “Mid-Century Modern” is about the longstanding friendship between three friends, Bunny (Nathan Lane), Jerry (Matt Bomer), and Arthur (Nathan Lee Graham). Do you have a friendship like the one shared by these three men?
MM: I’m absolutely engaged in a real version of what we're projecting on the show. I have that in my life. I cannot say that I'm Jerry in any way, but the one thing that we do have in common is that in my group, I'm the young one. But I think that that's very common in these families that

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we create. There's usually a young one. Our culture is built on learning from our elders. I didn't have a father growing up, so maybe that made me that much more inclined to seek out older, wiser, funnier, meaner friends. I mean the reason why you're looking at a mouthful of straight, white teeth is because one of those old bitches sat across from me about 25 years ago at a diner and said, "Girl, your teeth are a disaster, and you need to get that fixed immediately." What did I know? I was just a kid from Chicago with two nickels in my pocket. But I found three nickels and I went and had new teeth put in my head. But that came from one of my dearest in the group.

GS: Do you think that calling "Mid-Century Modern" a gay "Golden Girls" is a fair description?
MM: No. I think the gay "Golden Girls" was really just used as a tool to pitch the show quickly. We have an expression in town, which is "give me the elevator pitch," because nobody has an attention span. The fastest way you can tell someone what David (Kohan) and I wanted to write, was to say "It's gay Golden Girls." When you say that to somebody, then they say, "OK, sit down now, tell me more." We did that and then we started to dive into the show and realized pretty quickly that it's not the gay "Golden Girls." No disrespect to the "Golden Girls." It's a masterpiece.

GS: "Mid-Century Modern" is set in Palm Springs. I'm based in Fort Lauderdale, a few blocks south of Wilton Manors, and I was wondering if that gay enclave was ever in consideration for the setting, or was it always going to be in Palm Springs?
MM: You just asked a really incredible question! Because, during COVID, Matt Bomer and I used to walk, because we live close by. We had a little walking group of a few gay gentlemen. On one of those walks, Matt proposed a comedy set in Wilton Manors. He said it would be great to title the show "Wilton Manors." I will tell you that in the building blocks of what got us to "Mid-Century Modern," Wilton Manors, and that suggestion from Matt Bomer on our COVID walks, was part of it.

GS: Is Sybil, played by the late Linda Lavin, modeled after a mother you know?
MM: Rhea Kohan (mother of David and Jenji). When we met with Linda for the first time over Zoom, when she was abroad, David and I explained to her that this was all based on Rhea Kohan. In fact, some of the lines that she (Sybil) speaks in the pilot are the words that Jenji Kohan spoke about her mother in her eulogy at the funeral because it really summed up what the character was all about. Yes, it's very much based on someone.

GS: The Donny Osmond jokes in the second episode of "Mid-Century Modern" reminded me of the Barry Manilow "fanilows" on "Will & Grace." Do you know if Donny is aware that he's featured in the show?
MM: I don't. To tell you the truth, the "fanilow" episode was written when I was not on the show. I was on a forced hiatus, thanks to Jeff Zucker. That was a show that I was not part of. We don't really work that way. The Donny Osmond thing came

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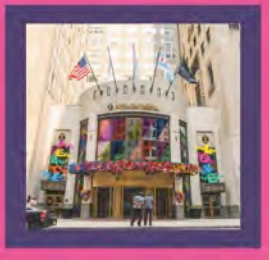

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more from Matt's character being a Mormon, and also one of the writers. It's very important to mention that the writing room at "Mid-Century Modern," is (made up of) wonderful and diverse and colorful incredible humans – one of them is an old, white, Irish guy named Don Roos who's brilliant…

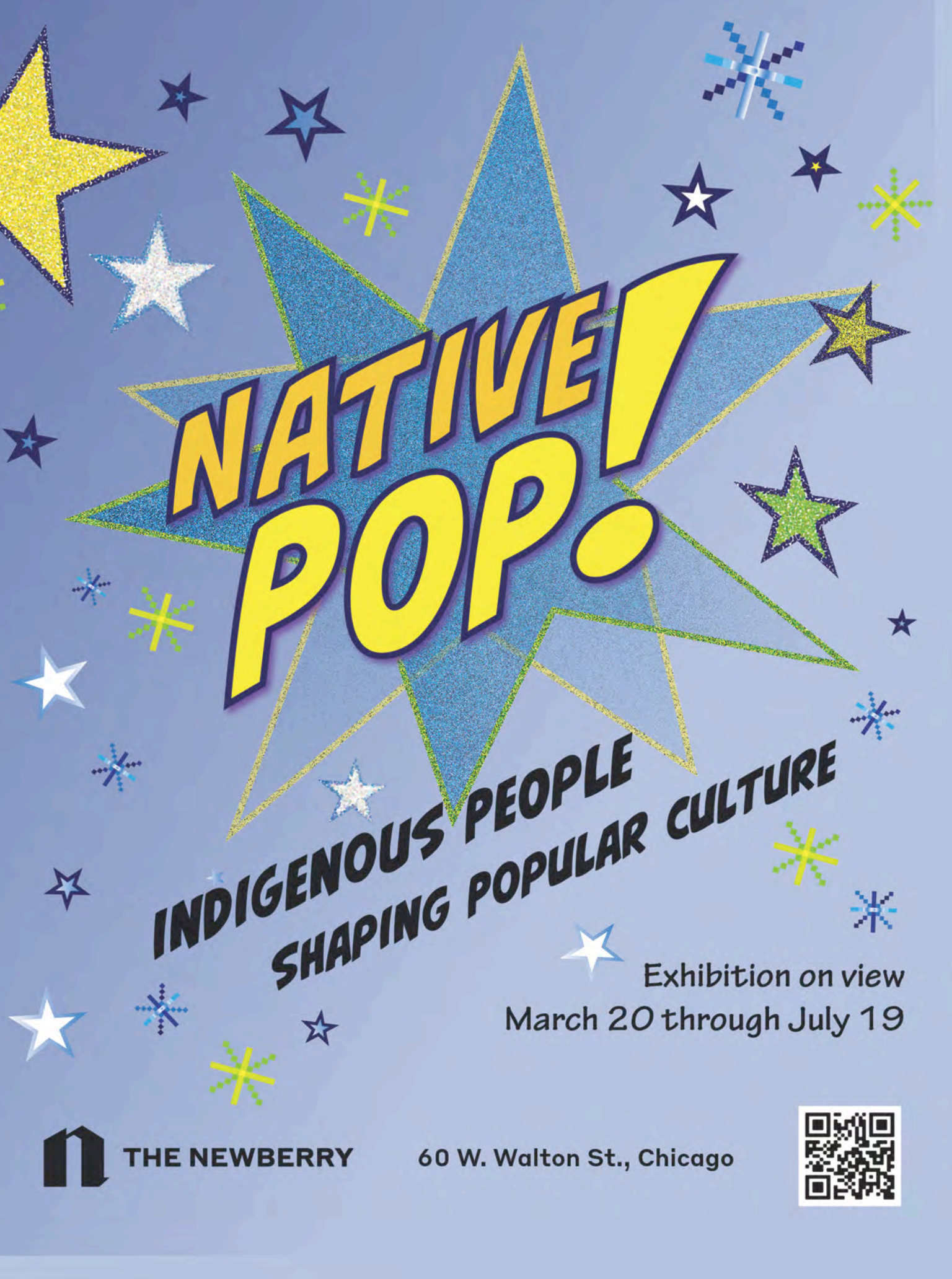
GS: …he's Dan Bucatinsky's husband.
MM: Right! Dan is also part of the writing room. But I believe it was Don who had a thing for Donny, and that's where it comes from. I don't know if Donny has any awareness. The only thing I care about when we turn in an episode like that is I just want to hear from legal that we're approved.

GS: "Mid-Century Modern" also includes opportunities for the singers in the cast. Linda Lavin sang the Jerome Kern/Ira Gershwin tune "Long Ago (And Far Away)" and Nathan Lane and the guys sang "He Had It Coming" from "Chicago." Was it important to give them the chance to exercise those muscles?
MM: I don't think it was. I think it really is just the managers' choice. David Kohan and I like that kind of stuff, so we write that kind of stuff. But by no means was there an edict to write that. We know what our cast is capable of, and we will absolutely exploit that if we're lucky enough to have a second season. I have a funky relationship with the song "Long Ago (And Far Away)." It doesn't float my boat, but everybody else loved it. We run a meritocracy, and the best idea will out. That's how that song ended up being in the show. I far prefer the recording of Linda singing "I'll Be Seeing You" over her montage in episode eight, "Here's To You, Mrs. Schneiderman." We were just lucky that Linda had recorded that. That recording was something that she had done and sent to somebody during COVID because she was held up in her apartment. That's what motivated her to make that video and send it. That's how we were able to use that audio.

GS: Being on a streaming service such as Hulu allows for characters to say things they might not get away with on network TV, including a foreskin joke, as well as Sybil's propensity for cursing.
MM: And the third line in the show is about him looking like a "reluctant bottom." I don't think that's something you're going to see on ABC anytime soon. David and I liked the opportunity to open up the language of this show because it might possibly open the door to bringing people…I'm going to mix metaphors…into the tent that have never been there before. A generation that writes off a sitcom because that language and that type of comedy isn't the way that they sound. One of the gifts of doing this show on Hulu is that we get to write dialogue that sounds a little bit more like you and I sound. As always, we don't want to do anything just to do it.

GS: It didn't feel that way.
MM: It's there when it's right. [Laughs] I want to have a shirt made with Linda's line, as her mother always used to say, "Time is a cunt."

GS: "Mid-Century Modern" also utilizes a lot of Jewish humor. How important is it for you to include that at this time when there is a measurable rise in antisemitism?
MM: I think it's important, but I don't think it's the reason why we did it. We tried very hard to not write from a place of teaching or preaching. We really are just writing about the stuff that makes us laugh. One of the things that makes something better and something that you can invest in is if it's more specific. We're creating a character whose name is Bunny Schneiderman and his mother's name is Sybil and they made their money in a family-run business, it gets Jewy, and we're not going to shy away from it. But we're definitely not going to address what's going on in the world. That doesn't mean I don't find it very upsetting, but I'm writing always from the point of view of entertaining the largest number of people that I can every week.
GS: "Mid-Century Modern" has a fantastic roster of guest stars including Jesse Tyler Ferguson, Vanessa Bayer, Billie Lourd, Cheri Oteri, Richard Kind, Rhea Perlman, and Judd Hirsch. Are there plans to continue that in future seasons?
MM: Yes. As I keep saying, if we're so lucky that we get to continue, I don't want to do "The Love Boat." Those are fine comic actors, so I don't think it feels like that. But if we get to keep going, what I want to do is broaden the world. Because that gives us more to write about. I want to start to introduce characters that are auxiliary to the individuals. I want to start to meet Arthur's family, so we can return to people. I want to introduce other neighbors, and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different types of gay men because we come in so many different flavors. I think that we should do that only because I'm sure it's what your life is and it's what my life is. I've got a lot of different types. So, yes, we will be doing more.

GS: Finally, Linda Lavin passed away in December 2024, and in a later episode, the subject of her character Sybil's passing is handled sensitively, including the humorous parts.
MM: We knew we had a tall order. We suffered an incredible loss in the middle of making this comedy. One of the reasons why I think this show works is because we are surrounded by a lot of really talented people. Jim Burrows and Ryan Murphy, to name two. Ryan played a very big role in telling us that it was important that we address this, that we address it immediately. That we show the world and the show goes on. That wasn't my instinct because I was so inside the grief of losing a friend, because she really was. It wasn't like one of those showbizzy-type relationships. And this is who she was, by the way, to everybody at the show. It was the way that we decided to go. Let's write this now. Let's not put this at the end of the season. Let's not satellite her in. Let's not "Darren Stevens" the character, which is something we would never do. The other thing that Jim Burrows made very clear to us was the import of the comedy. You have to write something that starts exactly in the place that these shows start. A set comedy piece that takes place in the kitchen. Because, for David and me, as writers, we said we just want to tell the truth. That's what we want to do with this episode and that's the way that this will probably go best for us. The way that we've dealt with grief in our lives is with humor. That is the way that we framed writing this episode. We wanted it to be a chapter from our lives, and how we experience this loss and how we recover and move on.

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GRAB MARTHA

Photo By Mike Ruiz

Martha Wash

The Two-time Grammy Nominee Performs One Night Only at City Winery Chicago

By Robert Hasselow

Martha Wash is set to captivate audiences at City Winery Chicago on Friday, May 2, with a one-night-only performance marking the Midwest kickoff of her highly anticipated Martha Wash: The Love and Conflict Tour. Best known for iconic hits like "It's Raining Men" and "Gonna Make You Sweat (Everybody Dance Now)," Wash will usher in the season of love with an unforgettable evening showcasing her signature powerhouse vocals and heartfelt passion. Fans can expect a mesmerizing journey through romantic and deeply moving songs from her acclaimed Love & Conflict album. We spoke with the legendary vocalist from her home in New York.

Robert Hasselow:You started your musical journey singing gospel in church and later studied opera. Do those early influences find their way into your performances today, particularly on this tour?
Martha Wash: Oh, absolutely. You'll always hear a bit of gospel in my music—it's in my DNA, darlin'. Even though Love & Conflict leans more into soul, rock, blues, and jazz, that gospel foundation is always there. For instance, songs like "Never Enough Money", "Like Fire", and "Honey My Friend" have that fiery intensity, and that's where the gospel influence shines through. Funny that you mention opera. While Love & Conflict doesn't have any operatic elements, I did bring that approach to my cover of "Dream On" by Aerosmith, which is on my Something Good album. But for Love & Conflict, it's really all about channeling that raw, bluesy, soulful, rock energy that I hope my core fans can get behind.

RH: How does performing songs from Love & Conflict compare to belting out anthems like "It's Raining Men" on stage?
MW: Performing songs from Love & Conflict feels different because they're more personal and emotional. With songs like It's Raining Men, it's all about the energy and celebration. But with Love & Conflict, I'm connecting with the audience in a deeper, more vulnerable way. It's still powerful, just in a different way.

RH: What makes City Winery the perfect venue for this special one-night performance?
MW: This is my first time performing at any of the City Winery locations, but Chicago's City Winery just felt like a good fit. It has an intimate vibe where you get to connect with the audience, and that's exactly what I want for this show. It's the perfect spot to share the new music from Love & Conflict in a way that feels personal and laid-back.

RH: Let's talk about the album. Love & Conflict represents a bold departure from your dance music roots. What inspired you to explore blues-rock and adult contemporary sounds on this album?
MW: I've always been a fan of so many different genres, and I wanted to create an album that showcased that versatility. With Love & Conflict, I had the freedom to step outside the dance music world and explore a rawer, more organic sound. Gospel, blues, rock, and soul have always been a part of my foundation, and this album gave me the space to lean into those influences.
RH: It delves into themes of love, heartbreak, and resilience. Is there a particular song on Love & Conflict that resonates most deeply with you on a personal

level?
MW: Every song on Love & Conflict is personal, but "Never Enough Money" really stands out. It talks about greed and struggle, and it hits close to home for me, especially in these immediate times we're facing.

RH: Did any of the tracks push you outside of your comfort zone?
MW: There were definitely moments during the recording of "Like Fire" and "Never Enough Money" where I had to step outside my comfort zone. Both tracks required a raw energy and intensity that I wasn't used to bringing to the table. My producers pushed me to open up emotionally, especially with how I delivered the vocals. It wasn't easy, but once I allowed myself to feel the power behind the songs, everything clicked. It was challenging, but in the end, it was exactly what the songs needed.

Photo By Mike Ruiz

RH: Your songs have been featured in countless films and commercials. If you could choose a song from Love & Conflict to be the soundtrack for a movie, which track would it be and why?
MW: That's a good question! I believe all of the songs from Love & Conflict could be licensed in film, as well as theatre, TV, and commercials. It truly depends on the project, right? But I'm here for the collaborations, darlins'!

RH: Over the years, you've collaborated with some of the biggest names in music. If you could duet with any artist—past or present—on a Love & Conflict track, who would it be and why?
MW: My favorite artist was Aretha, so I'd have to say her. She had such a naturally soulful voice, rooted in gospel, and she could sing anything. If I had to pick a song, I'd go with "Glamour Flows"—I think we could've really rocked that one together.

RH: What excites you most about the summer ahead?
MW: What excites me most is hitting the road, sharing the music with the fans, meeting new ones, and getting their feedback on the show. It's been a minute since I've toured with my own show.

R H: For fans who have followed you since the early days of Two Tons O' Fun and The Weather Girls, what message do you hope they take away from this tour?
MW: For the fans who've been with me since the Two Tons O' Fun and Weather Girls days, I just want to say thank you for sticking with me all these years. I hope that they'll feel the heart and soul in the music on this tour and know that we've all been through some of the same struggles and joys. I want them to know that I'm still here, still doing what I love, and I appreciate their support more than they'll ever know.

Tickets for Martha Wash: The Love and Conflict Tour at City Winery Chicago are on sale now at ***http://www.citywinery.com/***

GRAB BRUCE

"Bad Idea" is a good time: An interview with gay writer Bruce Vilanch

By Gregg Shapiro

Photo By Rick Stockwell

When it comes to writing, prolific and hilarious gay scribe **Bruce Vilanch** has just about everybody else beat. His distinctive comedic style has earned him two Emmy Awards for the multiple Oscar spectacles he penned. He also has long-standing creative relationships with top- notch artists, including Bette Midler, for whom he has written reams of comedic material. In his second book, "It Seemed Like a Bad Idea at the Time" (Chicago Review Press, 2025), Vilanch shines a klieg light on some of his more infamous efforts including TV fare such as "The Star Wars Holiday Special," "The Paul Lynde Halloween Special," "The Brady Bunch Hour," as well as the movies "Can't Stop The Music" and "The Ice Pirates," demonstrating his ability to have a sense of humor even in the worst situations. Bruce was generous enough to make time for an interview mere days after the book's publication.

Gregg Shapiro: Bruce, there's a 25-year gap between your first book "Bruce!: My Adventures in the Skin Trade and Other Essays" and your new book "It Seemed Like a Bad Idea at the Time." Why was now the time to write a new book?
Bruce Vilanch: During COVID, I found myself on a lot of lockdown podcasts with hosts who were born after I wrote all these shows but encountered them on the Internet. They all wanted to know how these curiosities happened. Who said yes? And did they escape jail on appeal [laughs]? I thought this was a new way to do a sort-of memoir.

GS: "It Seemed Like a Bad Idea at the Time" is full of vivid details. Were you a journal keeper, or was this all written from memory?
BV: I do keep a journal, but a lot of the old ones were washed away in a flood. Seriously. So, some of the stuff is just from memory and my haunted dreams.

GS: Would it be fair to say that the book is also a Hollywood/ show business history lesson? After all, there are footnotes.
BV: I was afraid a younger audience wouldn't get many of the references to things that happened forty years ago, but then I read Mary Rodgers' memoir, which she died before she finished and was completed by Jesse Green, who added footnotes which are as entertaining as the book. So why not give it a twirl? It is a history of a certain kind of show biz, of sorts.

GS: Did you ever think you'd write a book with footnotes?
BV: I never thought I'd write one with explicit sexual positions, but that may be the next one.

GS: Both of your books are nonfiction works. Do you think you might have a novel in you?
BV: I would love to give it a go. Novelists tend to go away somewhere to a cabin where they are hobbled by their nurse and I'm not sure I'm that anti-social. I am a good collaborator, but I just have to carve out time to do a novel and nothing else. For the moment, I'm working on a play.

GS: Being a Chicago native, I appreciated that you referred to Kitty Sheehan. Was Kitty Sheon's a bar you frequented when you lived in Chicago?
BV: I would drop in now and again. Kitty's was a dress bar, as in shirt and tie. Clearly, I am not that type. Also, it appealed to the older crowd, and the younger crowd that was hoping to be "sponsored" by the older one, and I fell into neither demo – at the time [laughs].

GS: You were the subject of the 1999 doc "Get Bruce!" and Allan Carr, whom you write about in the "Can't Stop The Music" and "Oscar! Oscar" chapters, was the subject of the 2017 doc "The Fabulous Allan Carr." Is there anyone else that you wrote about in the book that you think would

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make for a good documentary subject?
BV: Everybody is a good documentary subject. I think reality TV has revealed that dirty secret.

GS: Speaking of "Can't Stop The Music," the Village People were featured prominently in the movie. The current POTUS has an affinity for the Village People song "YMCA," and Victor Willis, whom you also write about, claims that the song isn't a gay tune. Do you have any thoughts about that?
BV: Victor also probably thinks the world is flat and Justin Trudeau is Fidel Castro's son. He's a weird cat who I never really got to know. Now that he controls the Village People brand, he's doing it his way, and it's pretty funny/sad to the original fans who know exactly what the group was about.

GS: In the "Platinum" chapter, you wrote about the tryouts at The Kennedy Center. How do you feel about what's taking place there now?
BV: It's tragic. Hopefully, it will recover in 2028, at which time the title "Country Music Capital of the World" will return to Nashville.

GS: You had the good fortune to work with two of the "Golden Girls" – Bea Arthur and Betty White – on separate occasions. The new Netflix sitcom "Mid-Century Modern" is said to be a gay "Golden Girls." What do you think about that concept?
BV: It's "Golden Girls" meets "Will & Grace," courtesy of Max Mutchnick and David Kohan, creators of the latter. I saw the last episode taped, and it was hilarious. The characters are recognizable types but written with a real humanity that goes beyond stereotypical bitchiness. Also, it was Linda Lavin's last work and she is magnificent.

GS: In the "Oscar! Oscar!" chapter, you write about the notorious Snow White musical number. With that in mind, would you care to share your thoughts about the forthcoming live-action Disney "Snow White" movie?
BV: Around town, they are calling it "Snow Woke," and I'm not exactly sure what to make of that. But I will certainly go to see it before rendering a verdict, as unfashionable as that behavior seems to be.

GS: Are there any upcoming creative projects that you'd like to share with the readers?
BV: If you're in Australia in June, go see "Here You Come Again," a musical using Dolly Parton's music authorized by her. I co-wrote it with Tricia Paoluccio, who plays Dolly, and Gabriel Barre, our director. Funny, sweet, and just off a very successful six-month tour of the UK. You'll have a good time!

Photo By Jordan Strauss

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GRAB GRANT

Interview with Carnal+ Exclusive Grant Ducati

By Tom Olah

PhotoCourtesy of Carnal+

Tom Olah: In just four years, you've become one of the most recognizable faces in the industry – what do you think it is about you that's captured the attention and hearts of fans worldwide?
Grant Ducati: I think it's my authenticity, which comes easily when I enjoy what I do so much. That noticeable enjoyment is what fans have told me they enjoy the most. Being able to share my life on social media, my sexual adventures on OnlyFans, and my studio work with CarnalPlus, BarebackPlus, and FTMPlus has really helped me grow my audience even further.

TO: What's the secret to your on-screen chemistry with your co-stars?
GD: Something fairly consistent within the industry is how easy most performers are to get along with. We're all there to get the same unique job done, and generally, we understand what each other is going through on camera, so it's always a team effort to make each other's experiences more enjoyable. Something Cade Maddox taught me in my first studio scene was to look for meaningful little intimate moments between cuts if your scene partner is receptive. Being with performers who are only "on" on camera does make it more difficult to enjoy the scene, but I've thankfully only rarely run into that on set, and that was before I joined the Carnal team.

TO: How much of your on-screen persona reflects your real-life desires?
GD: I'd say studio and my own personal content are two different stories. I do enjoy the scenarios and the men I get to film with at Carnal, but over the years, I've been able to create a brand that lets me explore the things I enjoy when I see them in other people's work. So, in short, 100 percent of my online persona reflects my real-life desires.

TO: What's something about you that fans would be surprised to learn?
GD: I never wear underwear in real life. It's great and sexy in bed and on camera, but I'm always freeballing. It gets a little challenging when fans ask to buy my underwear because I never have a surplus! I don't want to get rid of my good stuff, which I buy for on-camera use, but it's literally all I've got!

TO: When you're not working, how do you like to unwind and recharge?
GD: I'm a homebody for the most part, but I love spending time with my dogs and having chill nights with close friends. My partner and I also do some local gay sports leagues, but on off nights, we love taking the pups to the dog park or Piedmont here in Atlanta. I've always loved playing video games as well, mostly Rockstar and 2K games on Xbox!

TO: What's something you're incredibly passionate about

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outside of your work?
GD: I'm actually a major car nerd, to the point where it's obnoxious at times. Especially outside the US, when I get to see models we don't get back home. I grew up going to car shows with my grandfather, and my godfather being one of the best-known VW tuners and restorers in the USA. Audis have always been my favorite, weirdly being owned by VW, just like my namesake Ducati!

TO: What's a guilty pleasure that always puts a smile on your face?
GD: I'm not sure if it's a guilty pleasure, but I love long solo edging sessions. It definitely makes getting solo videos of myself more difficult at times because I don't feel like fans want to watch me stare at my phone and edge for an hour, but it's what I'd rather do sometimes, so I do it anyway, at the cost of making me content. I do at least occasionally catch the cumshot on camera, so if you've seen a cumshot video of mine with no lead-up, just know that's why!

TO: What's a small, everyday thing that makes you truly happy?
GD: The weather, greenery, and people of Atlanta and southern hospitality really make my heart full. I tried LA and ended up not being a big fan. I grew up in rural Alabama, deep in the woods off a dirt road, and with Atlanta being known as "the city in the forest," I feel like I belong here much more than LA. The city and my interactions with people left me feeling empty and depressed. Coming home to my roots has completely reversed that and given me back my passion for porn and this industry.

TO: If you could have dinner with any celebrity, living or dead, who would it be and why?
GD: I feel like the easiest answer would be Lana Del Rey. I grew up and went through high school, college, and my most difficult moments with her music. My stage name "Grant" is derived directly from her legal last name, and even my tattoo on my left hand is styled after her "paradise" tattoo in the same spot. There are some parts about becoming "popular" and life in general that I'd love to ask her advice on as well, but I'd consider any time spent with her a very high point in my life. Like her, I strive to make my work authentic to me, my relationships nourishing for a rich life, and my interactions with the world loving and bright.

To See more of Grant visit https://www.carnalplus.com

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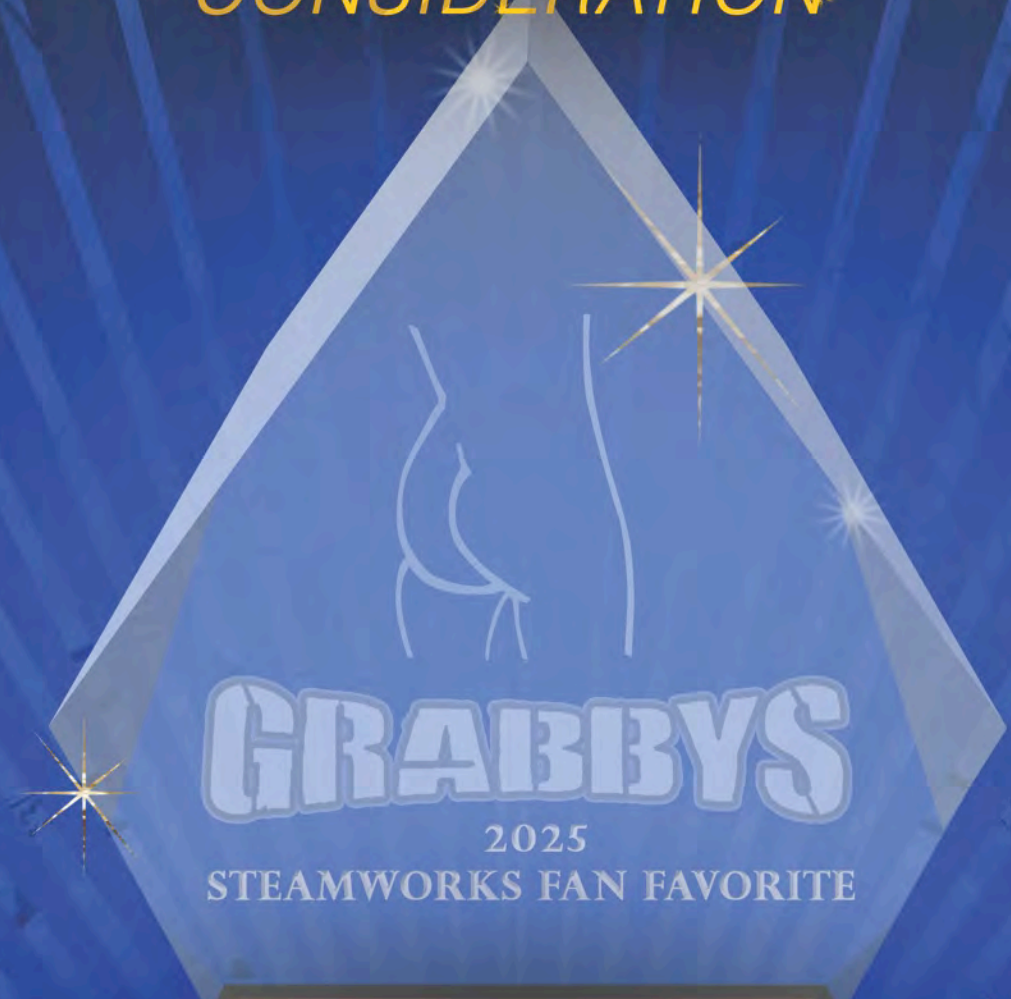

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Daily Specials;

MONDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $5 Stoli Cocktails (Any Flavors), EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts***.@mosphere:*** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm. ***Cell Block:*** Open 4pm-2am. ***Charlies:*** Half off Hennessy and Patron 7pm - 11pm ABC Bingo, 11pm Charlie's Live. ***Hydrate:*** Lips and Mascara Doors at 8pm Show at 10pm. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $5 Well Drinks.***Shakers on Clark:*** Comedy Night $1 off Well Drinks and Well Shots. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 3pm, Musical Monday Show Tunes 8pm-2am. ***Steamworks:*** Every 3rd Monday TM4M (Trans Men For Men) 8pm-2am. ***The Sofo Tap:*** $5 Whiskeys, Ryes & Bourbons, $5 Tecate Tallboys, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts. ***Touche:*** Open 5pm-4am. Horny Bastards A Night for those who just didn't get enough over the weekend.ClubRoom Opens at 6pm, 6-9pm $3 Well Drinks $1 Off call-imports, $3 PBR/Rolling Rock. Club Room Open! 4/7 Game On! NCAA College Basketball Championship Game.

TUESDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $3 House Shots, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts***@mosphere:*** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Game Night with Tony. ***Cell Block:*** Open 4pm-2am. ***Charlie's:*** $4 You Call It's 5pm - 9pm, 7pm - 11pm BS Karaoke, 11pm Baddies Block Party. ***Hydrate:*** TatTuesday XXL Doors open at 8pm. ***Kit Kat Lounge:*** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis ***Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. Open auditions for male dancers 7pm. $5 drink specials. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** $3 House Shots, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, $5 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $5 Canned Beers, Seltzers & Ciders. ***Shakers on Clark:*** $3 Domestic Beers. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 3pm, Trivia Tuesday 8-10pm, TRL Tuesday: Totally Rad Line-up of 90's-to-Now Music Videos 10pm-2am, OUTspoken LGBTQ+ Storytelling 1st Tuesday of the month from 7-9pm. ***Steamworks:*** Every Tuesday 4 pm – 4 am Guys Under 25 Get In Free* (*Free 30 day membership and free locker). ***The Sofo Tap:*** $5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts ***Touche:*** Open 5pm - 4am.Hardcore Cruisin' No Cell Phones/Wifi, 6-9pm $3 Well Drinks $1 Off call-imports, $3 PBR/Rolling Rock.

WEDNESDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. ***Cell Block:*** Open 4pm-2am. ***Charlie's:*** $4 You Call it's 5pm - 9pm, 7pm - 11pm SCCDA Country Dancing, 11pm Boys and Booze. ***Jackhammer:*** $4 Premium Well Cocktails, $3 House Shots, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. ***Kit Kat Lounge:*** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis ***Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open at 6pm Dancers at 8pm. $5 drink specials. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** $4 Miller Lite Drafts, $5 Stoli Cocktails (All Flavors), EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. ***North End:*** Open at 11am $5 Lagunitas Draft & Cans. ***Shakers on Clark***: Karaoke Night $1 Off Long Islands. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 3pm, All Things Taylor 1st Wed of month, All Things Beyoncé 2nd Wed of month, All Things Gaga 3rd Wed of month, All Things Dua & Ariana last Wed of month: all 9pm-2am. ***Steamworks:*** Bear Hump Every second Wednesday 6-9pm A monthly mid-week gathering of Furry Men. ***The Sofo Tap:*** $3 House Shots, $5 Stoli Cocktails (All Flavors), $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts. ***Touche:*** Open 5pm - 4am. Jockstrap Night Sponsored by Leather 64TEN Free Clothing Check. 6-9pm $3 Well Drinks $1 Off call-imports, $3 PBR/Rolling Rock.

THURSDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. ***@mosphere:*** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, RuPaul Drag Race All Stars 6 Viewing Party - 7pm. ***Charlie's:*** 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month: $4 You Call it's 5pm - 9pm, 8pm - 10pm Mother Rebirth, 10pm - Power up Reloaded. 2nd Thursday of the Month: $4 You Call it's 5pm - 9pm, 8pm - 10pm the Pop Ball, 10pm Scissor Sisters. 4th Thursday of the Month: $4 You Call it's 5pm - 9pm, 8pm - 10pm the Pop Ball, 10pm Vinyl. ***Jackhammer:*** $3 House Shots, $5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $5 Miller Lite Tallboys, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. ***Kit Kat Lounge:*** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis.***Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open at 6pm. Dancers at 8pm. $5 drink specials. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** $4 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $5 Deep Eddy Cocktails. ***Shakers on Clark:*** $1 off All Call Liquor Mixed Drinks,Karaoke 10pm-1am. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 3pm, Let's Go Thursday! Pop Music Videos in Glass/Side Bars 9pm-2am, Pink Pony Club 1st Thur of month in Main Bar, All Things K-Pop other Thursdays in Main Bar. ***Steamworks:*** Lights Out Thursdays, The Club goes Dark Every Thursday 4pm-4am. ***The Sofo Tap:*** $5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $5 Stoli Mules (All Flavors), EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts ***Touche:*** Open 5pm - 4am.Throwback Thursdays 70's & 80's Music and Porn by Bijou Video.

Daily Specials;

FRIDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: HAPPY HOUR (3-7 PM): $4 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $5 Chicago Handshakes, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $3 House Shots, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. **@mosphere:** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 6-8pm, Dancers 10pm-1am. **Baton Show Lounge:** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. **Cell Block:** Open 4pm-2am. **Charlie's**: 1st Friday of the Month 8pm - 11pm Cage Fight Allstars, 11pm Charlie's Presents. 2nd Friday:8pm - 11pm Cage Fight Allstars, 11pm Glow Up. 3rd Friday 8pm - 11pm Cage Fight Allstars, 11pm Thirst Trap. 4th Friday 8pm - 11pm Cage Fight Allstars 11pm Haus of Charlie's. **Jackhammer:** $8 New Amsterdam & Red Bulls, $8 WYNK THC, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. **Kit Kat Lounge:** Happy Hour 5-7pm $8.95 Martinis. **Sidetrack:** Open at 3pm, TGIF Show Tunes 4-9pm, Friday Night Dance Party 9pm-2am. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** HAPPY HOUR (5-8 PM): $5 Chicago Handshakes, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $6 Tito's Cocktails, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. **The Sofo Tap:** HAPPY HOUR (3-6 PM): $4 Signature Margaritas, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts. **Touche:** Open 5pm - 4am. 4/18 Cowboy Round Up with ILGRA.

SATURDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: HAPPY HOUR (3-7 PM): 1/2 Off All Draft Beers, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. ***@mosphere:*** $5 Well Cocktails & Draft Beer 3pm-5pm, Dancers 10pm -1am. ***Baton Show Lounge:*** Doors open at 6pm, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. ***Cell Block:*** Open 2pm-3am. ***Charlie's:*** 7pm - 11pm SCCDA Country Dancing, 11pm Under the boots tonight. ***Jackhammer:*** $3 House Shots, $8 New Amsterdam & Red Bulls, $8 WYNK THC, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. ***Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open with dancers at 3pm. $5 drink specials. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** HAPPY HOUR (2-5 PM): $5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $5 Lost Coast Tangerine Wheat Drafts, $5 Signature Margaritas, $8 WYNK THC, $3 House Shots, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 11am-2pm. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 1pm, Post-Brunch SaturGay Fun 1pm-6pm, Saturday Night Dance Party 9pm-3am, Dog Day 1st Saturday of the month 1-5pm. ***The Sofo Tap:*** HAPPY HOUR: (12-3 PM): 1/2 Off All Draft Beers, ALL DAY SPECIALS: $5 Miller Lite Drafts, $5 Signature Margaritas, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts ***Touche:*** Open 2pm - 5am.4/19 Gear Night with BLUF/Chicago dress Code in Club Room BNC 6pm. 4/26 RIPE Party Dim Lights, Deep Beats Go-Go Dudes DJ Harry T.

SUNDAY FUNDAY

2 Bears Tavern Uptown: $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $6 Chicago Handshakes, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pinball & Darts. ***@mosphere:*** $6 Jack Products, $4 Domestic Draft, House Shots $2. ***Baton Show Lounge:*** Doors Open at 11am, Shows at 7:30pm, 9:30pm & 11:30pm. ***Cell Block:*** Open 2pm-2am ***Charlie's:*** 1st and 3rd Sunday of the Month5pm - 7pm Queeriod, 7pm - 11pm Starlight Karaoke, 11pm Estrellas, Ritmo, y Perreo. 2nd Sunday 5pm -7pm Queeriod Presents Drag U 7pm - 11pm Starlight Karaoke, 11pm Estrellas, Ritmo y Perreo. 4th Sunday 5pm - 7pm Queeriod Presents Boyfriend Material, 7pm - 11pm Starlight Karaoke, 11pm Estrellas, Ritmo y Perreo. ***Hydrate:*** Doors open at 2pm Northalsted's Official after Brunch party. ***Jackhammer:*** HAPPY HOUR (3-7 PM): $3 House Shots, $5 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $7 Jackhammered Long Islands, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Pool & Darts. ***Kit Kat Lounge:*** Divalicious brunch 11am-3pm, Happy Hour 4-7pm $8.95 Martinis ***.Lucky Horseshoe:*** Open with dancers at 3pm. $5 drink specials. ***Meeting House Tavern:*** $5 Premium Well Cocktails, $12 Mimosa Carafes, $3 House Shots, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts & Pool. ***North End:*** Open at 11am, $3 Miller Lite Drafts 7-10pm ***Shakers on Clark***: $1 off Bloody Mary's, $1 off Mules: Vodka, Tequila, or Whiskey. And $1 off all Revolution beers. ***Sidetrack:*** Open at 1pm, Sunday Funday Show Tunes 4-9pm, Sunday Funday After Dark Dance Party 9pm-2am . ***The Sofo Tap:*** HAPPY HOUR (1-3 PM): $3 House Shots, FREE Hotdogs (while supplies last) ALL DAY SPECIALS: $6 New Amsterdam Cocktails, $5 Miller Lite Drafts, EVERYDAY SPECIALS: $4 Tallboy Beers (Old Style, PBR, Hamm's), $5 Jägermeister, Fireball & Malört Shots, FREE Darts. ***Touche:*** Open 2pm - 4am**.** Beer Bust $2 Bud Light Drafts, $2 Sodas, Clubroom Opens 6pm, Movie Night 7pm.

The Next Issue of GRAB hits the streets and online Tuesday May 20th reserve your space today Call 773-707-2660 or email GRABStacy@gmail.com

GRAB A HIT

Top 30 Dance Chart For the First week of April 2025

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	Artist	Title
1	Kygo & Imagine Dragons	Stars Will Align (Zerb Remix)
2	Kastra & Dani King	I Can't Stop
3	Max Rae X Montell Jordan X Alex Gaudino	How We Do It (Radio) (Until Dawn Remix)
4	Lucas & Steve	Heart First ft. Jordan Shaw
5	Sasson	Energy feat. Drea (Radio Edit)
6	Sonny Fodera x Jazzy & D.O.D	Somedays
7	Anyma & Ellie Goulding	Hypnotized
8	Hayla	Visions Of You (Radio Edit)
9	Vincent	Love Me Now
10	Netsky	California Ft. Cloves
11	Tsha	Drive Ft. Ingrid Witt
12	Dom Dolla & Tove Lo	Cave (Clean)
13	Blond Ish	Self Love
14	Audien	Living In Color ft. Jeoff Harris
15	Thierry Von Der Warth X Voltage	Back In Love (Radio Edit)
16	DE SOFFER	Waste No Time (Radio Mix)
17	Netsky & Andromedik	Out Of Body
18	Ben Renna	Falling Ft. Emma Lx (Mind Electric Remix)
19	Starsigns x Lena Leon x Myrne	Libra (Wasteland) Ft. Manila Killa Yetep
20	Sam Green & 5 A.M. Club & Taet	Foolish Ft. Taet
21	Disco Fries X Mintd X Kayrae	Never Mine
22	Ron Carroll X Soleil Carrillo X Kellari	Same Vibration (Radio Mix)
23	Loud Luxury	Crash (Radio Edit)
24	Don Diablo & MK ft. Gaby Gerlis	Next To Me
25	Manyfew	Drip
26	Nilsix Ft Breanna Grace	Out Of The Water (Original Mix)
27	David Guetta x Alphaville & Ava Max	Forever Young (Don Diablo Remix)
28	Pls&Ty & X.O.Anne	Leave The Light On
29	Noizu & Annaca	Dancing In The Dark
30	Shygirl	F Me Ft. Yseult

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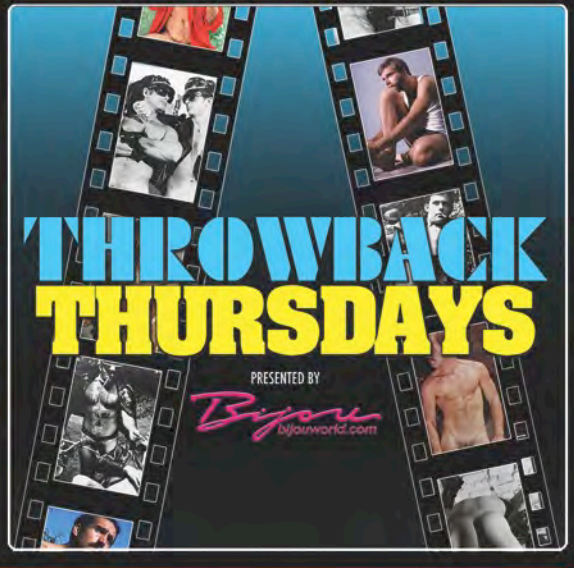

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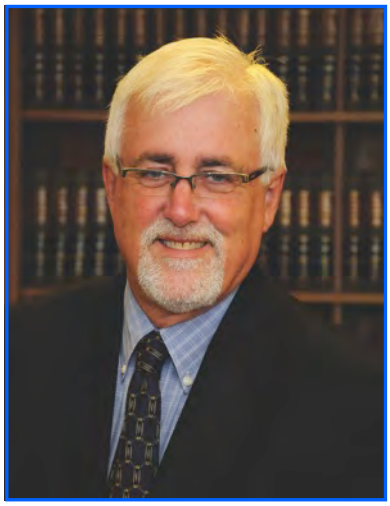
GRAB ROGER

Avoiding Problems When Buying a Home

By Roger V. McCaffre-Boss, Esq.



After looking at what seems like a hundred apartments, you've picked the apartment of your dreams and the time comes to make a purchase offer. Some common problems that I see buyers face when buying either a house or a condominium:

Falling in Love with the Model. In choosing a building it is usually best to buy in the worst building in a good area than buy in the best building in an adequate or marginal area. Ask about the physical condition of the building – recent repairs, structural improvements and planned large special assessments. There have always been three rules in buying real estate: “Location, location and location.” Look for access to public transportation, nearness to good shopping areas and restaurants. And, walk the neighborhood, a drive through is never enough.

Overpaying. The seller's asking price for the apartment usually has been arrived at through negotiation between the seller and the broker. Its is not uncommon for a broker to get a listing to sell an apartment because the broker has suggested a high asking price. Therefore, consider the asking price as the starting point.

When it comes time to make an offer instruct the broker to tell the seller of any offer you wish to make - brokers are obligated under law to convey your offer to the seller regardless of the price.

It will be up to you to do the price negotiation. Brokers aren't any more expert in the negotiating process, all they can do is tell you about the seller's personality. Once you have made your initial offer and the broker comes back with a counter offer you know that the bargaining has begun. If you get a response of "no", look elsewhere. Oftentimes it is best to sit down face to face with the seller. It can be harder for them to reject your offer in person than over the phone.

Hire a Lawyer. When an offer has been accepted, don't sign the final contract unless you consult with your attorney or there is an attorney approval clause in the contract allowing your attorney five business days to review and cancel the contract. Your lawyer will need the time to review the contract and insist that safeguards and protections be put into the contract for your benefit.

If you as a buyer are feeling pressured to sign the contract with an attorney approval clause, do not deposit the full amount of the earnest money. Only deposit $500 to $1,000. The balance can be paid when attorney review and the building inspection contingency is over.

The importance of the sales contract cannot be underestimated. The contract defines the entire relationship between the seller and the buyer, it describes each parties rights and obligations. Merely because the contract is preprinted does not mean that the terms are standard or universally accepted. The law is always changing, costs are always increasing and no purchase of real estate is like any other. The boilerplate terms and fine print have to be reviewed and edited to correspond with your purchase. Most importantly the contract sets forth the seller's obligations to provide good title when it comes time to close.

Pre-Closing Walkthrough. Finally, make sure you have inspected the apartment on the day of closing. Check all the appliances, make sure all promised repairs are done and that the apartment is clean and vacant. This is the time to make sure the seller has done everything they were supposed to do – it will be too late after the closing.

Buying a home is probably the largest financial transaction that most people will ever make. The lawyer makes it easier for the buyer. And a good lawyer will make the purchase of your home a pleasure instead of agony.

*Roger McCaffrey-Boss is a gradute of Hamline University School of Law, St. Paul, Minnesota, and is a member of the Chicago Bar Association. You can email him at **RVMLawyer@aol.com**. He suggests that you consult your own lawyer for any specific questions regarding the issues raised in this column.*

SUICIDE WARNING SIGNS FOR YOUTH
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When I Think of Porn…

By Holly Maholm

I think of Tracy… as Upright, Rigid and Erect a Member of our community as you will Come upon in our little town. Now, you may imagine that Tracy's reputation is attributable to his performances in multiple cell-phone videos in which his male accoutrement contributes that… emblematic embodiment of masculinity which is so appreciated in porn. But no, that's not the connection we know between Tracy and that galaxy of adult dramas we categorize as "porn." Instead, it is this:

There is a subcategory of TV documentaries that is informally referred to as "Murder Porn." These programs are uniform in their storytelling, with little variation in cast, victim, perpetrator, cause-of-death or final verdict (usually "Guilty"). The viewers of Murder Porn are nearly all female, because the unvarying tropes employed there resonate so powerfully with women: The helpless, innocent victim (usually a young woman, often a virgin), the heartless, unfeeling, controlling husband (usually the murderer), and the hero detective (or victim's parents or siblings) who relentlessly hound the murderer until he is finally arrested.

I confess I am a fan of Murder Porn (after more than 40 years of devotion to the usual varieties of porn, these did – for me at last – begin to pale of their allure). One of the most powerful tropes of Murder Porn is the introduction of the victim, in which one of her friends will inform us that "She would light up any room when she walked in." Her friends always use the same phrase… "light up the room." It is one of the unbreakable rules of Murder Porn that all such young women – destined to die – have this effect upon others.

Why do I expend so much effort describing to you one of the unfailing indications of the "victim" in Murder Porn? It is because Tracy – innocent resident of our little town – seems to have been similarly marked out by fate for just such an untimely and felonious demise.

You see, Tracy is one of those people who… upon entering a room, multiplies and intensifies the humor, laughter and fun experienced by those in attendance. His personality sparkles with a sense of joyful, boisterous excitement, which is felt by all. Indeed, that glint of mischievous fun is so powerfully to be seen in his eyes, that – were he to be erroneously mis-cast as a character in a Murder Porn – he could not hope to survive.

You ask, "Did Tracy – having been marked out for murder by the fates – do what he could to avoid that result?" No. Tracy carved out for himself a career which required him to get on a first name basis with as many residents of Wellington as possible. You see, Tracy was the Editor, Publisher, Chief Marketing Officer, Byline Reporter, VP of Advertising Sales, and Proofreader of Last Resort for the Wellington Bee, the sole and only Newspaper-of-Record in our little town. Hence, everyone knew him; everyone with a business advertised with him in the Bee; and no resident would dare die without having first consulted with him (to receive the most sympathetic possible obituary).

It goes without saying that all of us at Donut Time know Tracy well. Aly knows what donuts Tracy prefers, Xandra knows when Tracy will come around to get her renewal of our ad in the Bee, and as for me… well, I am always careful what I say around him, lest I carelessly divulge something that might suggest to him that there is more going on out at the Horse Rescue than just orphan horses and fruit trees.

When Xandra, Cindy, Aly and I started in business at Donut Time, we got unwavering support from Tracy. He being same-sex attracted, he looked upon we trannies as "family," extending us credit for months of advertising until we got on our feet.

Whenever a new issue of the Bee comes out, he brings us a stack of copies, which we dole out day-after-day to keep our customers happy – and coming back. I can't emphasize enough how much this helps our sales. Customers – especially the Retirees – will Grab a copy of the Bee, then buy a coffee and donuts and sit for hours in a booth, reading that issue and conversing (or – as to the Retirees – arguing) with others concerning local events.

So, we always keep a stack of the Bee on hand, and we never fail to show our appreciation when Tracy comes in for his morning coffee and donuts. And, inasmuch as Donut Time employs three former tranny hookers (plus me, who has always had such a generous spirit that I can't bring myself to seek compensation for any services other than "legal advice"), it may even be that more than one of those employees has expressed her gratitude to Tracy in a most personal and pleasurable way.

(*To be continued)*

Holly Maholm is a transgender woman living in Cleveland, Ohio. Look for Holly's book Offered Magic: My Life Among the Unicorns (now available on Amazon) which collects the first 126 episodes of Holly's adventures involving both magical unicorns and her LGBTQ friends. Send a message to Holly at ***www.hollymaholm.com.***

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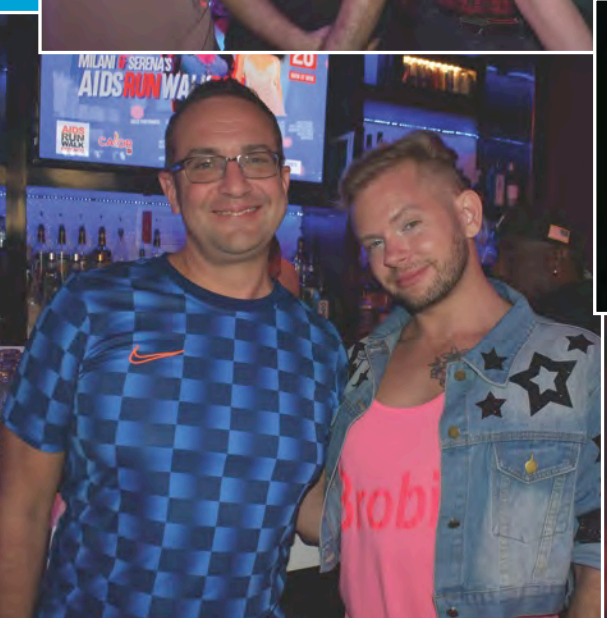

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GRAB DEVON

Devon Michael Sedrick Confronts Toxicity with Cheeky New Anthem "You Suck"

Photo By Haley Saunders

Devon Michael Sedrick is transforming personal pain into empowerment with his bold new single, "You Suck". Cheeky, playful, and just the right amount of naughty, the track is an anthem for anyone who's ever dealt with someone who made life harder than it needed to be.

"This song sparked from a situation I had at work where my supervisor would tell me that I was the best one minute, and scream at me the next," Devon recalls. "It was a chaotic, toxic environment. It was emotional whiplash nearly every day. It got to the point where even receiving a text from him gave me anxiety. He was sucking the life out of me."

At its core, "You Suck" is about reclaiming power, processing pain, and releasing the emotional baggage that others try to hand us.

"It's about acknowledging the suck and then letting it go," Devon says. "People can suck sometimes, but it's never about you. So why hold on to it?"

Raised in Nampa, Idaho as the eldest of six in a loud, mixed-race Mormon household—Filipino mom, European dad—Devon developed a love for connection and self-expression. "We were wild, loud, full of chaos and music," he says. "Being raised in such a unique family, then coming out as gay and leaving the church, it all shaped how I view the importance of vulnerability and what it means to express yourself authentically." His sound reflects that eclectic background, drawing influence from artists like Matt Corby, Tash Sultana, H.E.R., Rainbow Kitten Surprise, and Doechii.

Written and produced entirely by Devon, "You Suck" also spotlights his one-man-band looping style—a craft he began developing after moving to Los Angeles. "I came here thinking I'd collaborate with other artists but then came covid. So, I picked up a looper pedal and started building songs layer by layer, on my own."

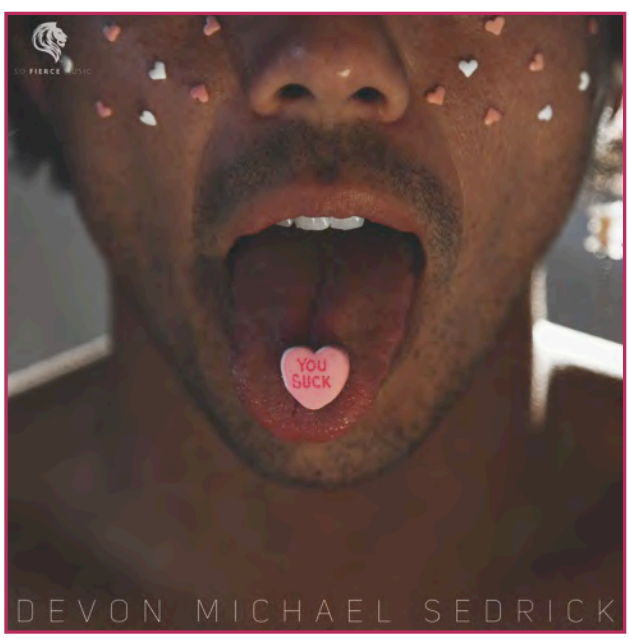
While "You Suck" delivers sass and humor, Devon's broader body of work dives fearlessly into more tender and taboo emotional spaces. From rage and shame to suicidal ideation and the journey toward self-acceptance, his music gives voice to the feelings many are afraid to express. "I've been unpacking my anger, and the parts of myself I've been ashamed of or felt the need to hide," he shares. "I want people to be able to explore and understand all parts of themselves, especially the hard parts."

Music, for Devon, is more than performance; it's personal liberation. "My goal is to write from an honest place and inspire others to express themselves more fully," he says. "'You Suck' is me putting my foot down and saying what I really feel—something I wasn't able to do with my earlier single 'IDK,' which came from a much more unsure place."

He hopes the song serves as a liberating reminder for anyone stuck in a joyless, draining relationship that it's okay to draw boundaries, reclaim your power, and even laugh about it. "I have a tendency to stay in bad relationships too long," he admits. "I always want to believe the best in people, but this song is a reminder to myself—and anyone else—that sometimes enough is enough."

"You Suck" is available now on all major streaming platforms. A live acoustic version, offering a stripped-down take on the song's cathartic message, is on Youtube. Fans can also expect a debut album later this year as Devon continues to fine-tune his sound and bare his soul through music.

Follow Devon Michael Sedrick on Instagram @ devonmichaelsedrick



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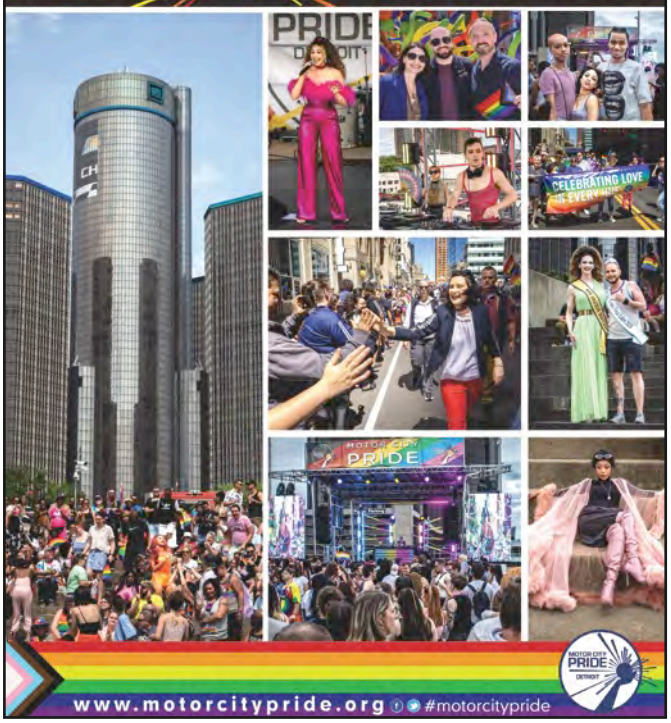

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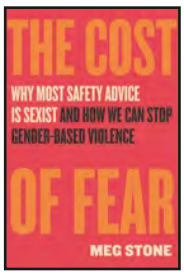
GRAB A BOOK

By Terri Schlichenmeyer

"The Cost of Fear: Why Most Safety Advice is Sexist and How We Can Stop Gender-Based Violence" *by Meg Stone*
c.2025, Beacon Press$26.95
232 pages



The footsteps fell behind you, keeping pace.

They were loud as an airplane, a few decibels below the beat of your heart. Yes, someone was following you, and you shouldn't have let it happen. You're no dummy. You're no wimp. Read the new book, "The Cost of Fear" by Meg Stone, and you're no statistic.

Ask around.

Query young women, older women, grandmothers and teenagers. Ask gay men, lesbians, and trans individuals, and chances are that every one of them has a story of being scared of another person in a public place. Scared – or worse.

Says Meg Stone, nearly half of the women in a recent survey reported having "experienced... unwanted sexual contact" of some sort. Almost a quarter of the men surveyed said the same. Nearly thirty percent of men in another survey admitted to having "perpetrated some form of sexual assault."

We focus on these statistics, says Stone, but we advise ineffectual safety measures.

"Victim blame is rampant," she says, and women and LGBTQ individuals are taught avoidance methods that may not work. If someone's in the "early stages of their careers," perpetrators may still hold all the cards through threats and career blackmail. Stone cites cases in which someone who was assaulted reported the crime, but police dropped the ball. Old tropes still exist and repeating or relying on them may be downright dangerous.

As a result of such ineffectiveness, fear keeps frightened individuals from normal activities, leaving the house, shopping, going out with friends for an evening.

So how can you stay safe?

Says Stone, learn how to fight back by using your whole body, not just your hands. Be willing to record what's happening. Don't abandon your activism, she says; in fact, join a group that helps give people tools to protect themselves. Learn the right way to stand up for someone who's uncomfortable or endangered. Remember that you can't be blamed for another person's bad behavior, and it shouldn't mean you can't react.

If you pick up "The Cost of Fear," hoping to learn ways to protect yourself, there are two things to keep in mind.

First, though most of this book is written for women, it doesn't take much of a leap to see how its advice could translate to any other world. Author Meg Stone, in fact, includes people of all ages, genders, and all races in her case studies and lessons, and she clearly explains a bit of what she teaches in her classes. That width is helpful, and welcome.

Secondly, she asks readers to do something potentially controversial: she requests changes in sentencing laws for certain former and rehabilitated abusers, particularly for offenders who were teens when sentenced. Stone lays out her reasoning and begs for understanding; still, some readers may be resistant and some may be triggered.

Keep that in mind, and "The Cost of Fear" is a great book for a young adult or anyone who needs to increase alertness, adopt careful practices, and stay safe. Take steps to have it soon

---

Poetry Books by various authors
c.2025, Penguin $18.99 - $20
various page counts

A, B, B, A.

That's not only how you spell the name of a popular music group. That's also how a poem might be structured, if it rhymes, or it might be created in other ways. That's the thing about poetry: it's all how you perceive it when creating it and reading it. So why not think about putting these great poetry books on your shelf this month…?

When you spend time with poetry, you expect a certain kind of relationship between author and reader. That's only part of what you get in **"The Space Between Men" by Mia S. Willis** (Penguin Poets, $20). It might also change the way you feel.

Here, Willis – a poet, historian, and educator – explores culture, Black history, and what it's like to be Black, Southern, and queer. When those various experiences come together in poetry here, it invites readers to consider the width and depth of the spaces, and their mere existence.

If short but image-fueled poetry appeals to you, this book is worth a good look.

Poetry can take your thoughts in many directions, including thoughts about yourself. If you're hungry for soul-searching, then try **"Is This My Final Form?" by Amy Gerstler** (Penguin Poets, $20).

Life doesn't follow a straight line. Some things are two things at once and situations can change, which are two points that seem to be everywhere inside this book. Is this a series of biographical poems with a twist of imagination, or are the poems in here a collection of new perceptions and ways to embrace what could be? Read, and think about it because it's up for a reader's interpretation. However you perceive these poems, you may chuckle sometimes. For sure, you'll want to read them again and think anew.

And finally, if your child loves the beauty of poetry and wonders how to create poems, then **"The One and Only Rumi" by Rabiah York**, illustrated by Maneli Manouchehri (Penguin, $18.99) is a book to bring to the table.

Here, children will learn the story of Muhammad, a wise young boy whose life changed when Genghis Khan came to his village. Muhammad was only allowed to fill a bag with possessions and he knew he'd miss the birds and the friends he'd made at home. His father said it was unlikely that they'd ever return.

Yes, there were other birds and other friends in his lifetime, but Muhammad never forgot the first ones and "he never stopped listening" to the wind or the sound of the leaves or the laughter of others. He grew to become a man, a teacher, and a poet, as your 8-to-12-year-old will see in this beautifully illustrated, beautifully told book.

If these collections about poetry and life don't quite fit what you need, be sure to ask your favorite bookseller or librarian for more. They can help you find poetry, silly rhymes, great biographies, and collections of verse that are perfect volumes with which to spend hours. In the meantime, give these poetry books an "A."

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DINING OUT FOR LIFE CHICAGO THURSDAY APRIL 24

On Thursday, April 24, join Chicago's restaurant community to ensure people affected by HIV can access essential services. Dine at a participating restaurant on April 24 and a portion of your bill will be donated to Vivent Health + TPAN. If you can't go out to eat, you can also order takeout, purchase a gift card, or make a donation to Vivent Health + TPAN!

For over 35 years, TPAN has delivered programs and services to people living with HIV. As a community health and wellness organization, our programs include mental health, substance abuse treatment, HIV testing, a syringe exchange program, and a drop-in center for LGBTQ+ youth. TPAN also publishes a nationally distributed HIV health magazine, Positively Aware. Help is available for free to everyone who walks through our doors.

Over the next year, you will see an expansion of services at TPAN with a merger with Vivent Health. New services will include wraparound social services, a health care clinic, legal services, dental care, and a food pantry. Most exciting, all these services will be under one roof—a model that has proven effective at helping people living with HIV achieve viral suppression. Vivent Health's care model is so effective that 95% of the people served by Vivent Health have achieved viral suppression, far above the national average of 81%. Vivent Health + TPAN brings this model of care to Chicago.

For a list of participating resaurants in Chicago visit ***http:www.diningoutforlife.com/city/chicago***

MASQUERRADING SONGBIRDS' TO SERENADE FOR AAPI MONTH

Asians and Friends Chicago (AFC), a social group for LGBTQ Asians, allies and those interested in Asian cultures, will host a celebration of song featuring AFC "celebrities" disguised in elaborate costumes during Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) month, all to support its 2025 Chicago Pride Parade float and related activities.

AFC's LGBTQ "Masquerade Songbird" evening will take place on Sat., May 17, 2025, at the Holiday Club, 4000 N. Sheridan in Chicago at 7 p.m. In addition to the lively singing competition, D.J. Aaron Sager will provide musical entertainment and support the songbirds as they strut their stuff in ornate, homespun costumes. Much like the popular TV show, guest judges will try to identify the singer and whittle the competition down to a final winner.

"We've never done an event like this before," said ***John McInteer,*** president of the Board of Directors for AFC. "But like the Pride Parade itself, it's an opportunity for our community to come together and express its creativity and passion for the arts."

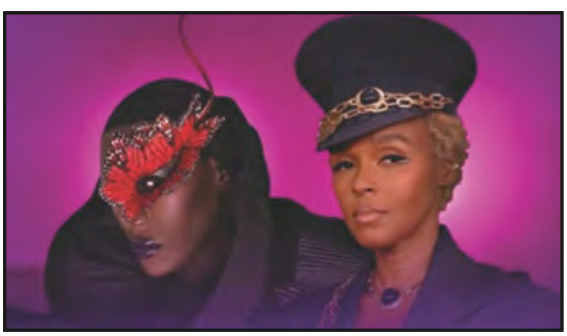
The event, which will bring together members of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) community and allies, also coincides with festivities celebrating AAPI month.

"Asian American Pacific Islander month is the perfect time to showcase the talents and artistic expression of our members, since our mission is to highlight cultures and heritages from those countries," McInteer said. "As a minority within a minority, AFC members with roots in the Philippines, China, Korea, Laos, Thailand and Hawaii can often feel lost in a city like Chicago, even within the LGBTQ community. We offer support and a place to build self-worth."

Tickets are available for a $25/person donation at ***http://afchicago.org.***

GRACE JONES AND JANELLE MONAE SATURDAY JUNE 7 AT RAVINIA

Grace Jones–the trailblazing icon of music, fashion, and film–takes the Ravinia Grace Jones–the trailblazing icon of music, fashion, and film–takes the Ravinia stage for the first time this summer, delivering a mesmerizing performance that defies genre and expectation. Throughout her career, the multi-talented artist has woven music across styles, bringing together disco, new wave post-punk, art pop, industrial, reggae, and gospel, creating "a tight sound that is distinctly hers" (Vice). Rolling Stone celebrates her remarkable influence, writing, "So many performers are said to be larger than life, but the show biz cliché has never been truer than it is for Grace Jones."



Jones is joined by Janelle Monáe–a trailblazer in her own right, making her own Ravinia debut–whose innovative spark has led to success in music and film, with ten Grammy nominations and performances in Glass Onion, Harriet, and Hidden Figures. NPR described her 2015 protest song "Hell You Talmbout" as "visceral" and "blistering," highlighting its powerful message against racial violence, and Rolling Stone praised her 2013 album The Electric Lady, highlighting Monáe's "sheer force of freakadelic will and a radical feminist's sense of self-exploration."

For more information and tickets vislt **https://www.ravinia.org/events**

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